

Moose Podcast #413

Moose Peterson Howdy. Howdy, folks. And welcome to Moos Podcast number 413. The Predicament. Man. Here we are. September 3rd and September 3rd. Wow. It's owner wildfire smoke in the air. There's also the chill of fall in the air here in Montana. It is getting warmer during the day, but it's got that distinct chill. Yep. Fall is around the corner. I cannot believe that we're already looking at fall. Looking at the foliage turning color chart. It looks like our wet cool spring has in some places delayed fall color by maybe a week. But it's something to think about if you are planning to go and do fall color like we are. Check out the the predictions. Think about where you want to go. Practice with that polarizer is an incredibly powerful tool for fall color. Remove that blue reflection from the sky brings out the colors because it's going to go fast, I think. And I think fall is going to adjust, the color is going to fly. And before we know it now, it's just going to fly. But I trust you had a great Labor Day. You're out there making those great clicks. Lots of things happen. Sharon I just back from a marvelous road trip and saw a lot of great stuff that I want to go out an adventure to again and further explore. I hope you had the same good fortune. So this is still being recorded using the Adobe Podcast Beta. You will find the transcript there on. The blog posts for this podcast on our website. Spotify, as I mentioned before, is kind of up the game. You can go to Spotify, listen to podcast stream, and of course you can grab the transcripts, which is a little bit better transcript on what you're going to find on my website. But you also can leave comments, and so far nobody has. I feel a little lonely. We can have a conversation. We could start something probably really cool. So head to Spotify, go to the podcast, that's the Moose podcast. Click on comments. Let's have a conversation. Speaking of conversations coming up here in a couple weeks, what, maybe three weeks now? Is the Kelby want Photoshop world? I've got three classes so far they'll be doing. I'll love to have you there. Another great place to ask questions. Learn some trivia. I've got some new material, some ideas, thoughts, concepts that might just help you move your photography forward. So I look forward to seeing you there at Photoshop World. One thing my good friends of Bedford Bedford scam for sponsoring the Muse podcast. They've been doing it for years. Love those guys. They had a big, big Labor Day sale. Now might be extended to today. I don't know. And keep in mind that all those sale prices, when you check out, you're still going to get the moose discount. That's pretty amazing. Can't verify it, but supposedly there are some big Nikon rebates. Even on top of those rebates, you're going to get that extra. From Bedford's for the moose discount. So they've got lots of great gear and stock, great service. Great, great prices. They even got photo con coming up here. Another marvelous event and another perfect example of just the continuing education and services they provide photographers. So that's Bedford's Bedford's dot com column. Go in. Go online. Whatever you do to thank him for sponsoring the Moose podcast, because they are great folks. The predicament. Like I mentioned, Sharon, I just came back from a really marvelous road trip about 2000 miles. And at the end of it, we were in Great Falls our last evening, and we checked out the Charlie Russell Museum. I'm going to assume that many of you don't know who Charles M Russell might be. Well, you should, no matter what genre of photography that you might be in. Mr. Russell. Can help your photography move forward. Now. He was born back in 1864. Passed away in 1926 right off the bat. That might just really make you wonder why, Mr. Russell, somehow you should know. It was interesting going to the exhibits. They had

photographs from Curtis and from Smith back when they did their work. Back at about the same time. Thirties at the latest. Of all the Native Americans. It was interesting that with an artist, they had those photographers in there, some great stuff. In fact, they had a just now remembered. They had a really nice thing about photography there and who I don't I didn't write it down to art. Anyway, it was their definition of how photography has changed from the days of the wet plate to that dry plate to film to the sensor. But getting back to Mr. Russell. This is a guy who was born in Saint Louis, Missouri, and then on a 16th birthday, traveled to Montana. And there his life was changed as. He was. Sucked in became part of the world. That is what we called it, the Old West. He he wanted to share. With everybody, the world that he knew because he saw it disappearing. So rather bad, that might just grab your attention because here's somebody who saw a world disappearing and wanted to share it. And I mean, back there, we're talking about, you know, he was, you know, the early, late 1890, 19 teens. There was no, as we know it today, means of communication. It was all. The written word, be it book or newspapers or in his case, paintings tell the story. Now, some of his paintings are seriously, really like smaller than a postcard. He would write letters. He seemed to be a prolific letter writer, and he would illustrate them as his pen and watercolor paintings. But there are that small and some the the there's an unfinished one in the museum, though a 16 foot long. And then there are some others that are 20 foot long. He's got a painting in the legislation there at Montana State Capitol, which, if I remember correctly, is 17 foot tall. I mean, so he his scale of work was was huge and big. But just to give you kind of example, he was a cowhand. They're in the muscle shell. It was a really nasty winter. And the owners of the herd were, of course, in a nice, warm place. But they were curious. How the cattle were doing. And what Mr. Russell did was in this piece of paper, smaller than a three by five card. He drew with pen and watercolor. This kind of skeleton look and cowl that was on its last leg. And that was his answer to these people, how her cattle were doing in the wintertime. Needless to say, it got the point across that the herd wasn't doing well. Now the predicament. So I was going through his the different collections because he was collected by many people back then. And this one collection, it seemed like the collector's theme was how? Charlie Russell kind of ended up his last so 15 years or so, 20 years was of his artwork. And this is a guy who created over 4000 works of art in those 40 years. Just think about how prolific of a painter he was, especially the size and the scale. Many. One of the last paintings his wife, Nancy, managed to get \$30,000 for before he passed away. Think about that \$30,000 back in 1922. That's a lot of money for a painting. Anyway, this collector. He had a there was a definite. Theme to the paintings. He had no worries. I'm going to get to your photography. It's I am or am talking about your photography my photography or photography but the for me that this collector. Had was what Charlie was doing. A majority of his paintings at the end called the you know, and it was simply the predicament. And, you know, most paintings of the West, they're kind of romanticized. And, of course, Charlie's words, well, some of them told stories. All of Charlie's told stories. But the one thing that, you know, was really quite distinct was there was a predicament. So he's got one fun painting and you could just Google Charlie Russell and these paintings will come up so you can see them. And the title of the painting. Who's meet? Seriously? Who's me? That's the title. The painting. And it's got to, you know, make you curious what's going on. But what you've got is a sweeping vista, which is classic try, Russell. And then you have this cowboy. Not a frontier cowboy. And he's got his Winchester by his side. He's holding the reins of his

horse. That's. That's kind of bucking. And he's got his pack horse behind it. And you look in the direction that the Cowboys looking at, you could see a grizzly bear on its hind legs. It's staring and between them and a little bit down slope and to the right corner is a bighorn sheep ram that the. Cowboy had just shot. And so the title Whose Meat? And it kind of comes back to the way that Charlie Russell painted was the predicament. So all of his characters and his characters could be one or two or a whole tribe of Indians or cowboys or combination. There was a predicament going on in that that scene, the Jamaican predicament could be as simple as which car to put down. If you're a game, you know, a gambling scene to a gunfight and a saloon to where the paintings are really got me. I don't remember the title, but basically it was a hold up, a big nose in a stagecoach and and Charlie Russell would put his friends faces in these paintings. And after he put himself in the painting at one point. But there was always a predicament. That was the way he told his story. And I was thinking, Wow. Wow. Think about the way that we. You, me, liked to tell our stories photographically. Is there. There's something, though, that kind of a common thread. It could be action. It could be emotion. There's a lot of possibilities. And the one that does besides the predicament that I really. Was fascinated by was Charlie Russell's evolution with light. Now. I started off and it was kind of interesting. I didn't know those two. I went to the museum, even though Sharon I had been a Charlie Russell fan for, oh, at least 30 years, if not more. We saw a one man show about him once, long ago up in Glacier, and we actually fell for for his his artwork and his stories. But anyway, he started off and most of his artwork was very, for lack of better terms, monochromatic or very. Grayish, darkish tones. There is very little color and all of a sudden he had a genesis and also start using color. And he was really well known for using very bright, vibrant color. And he's such a such a stickler for detail. I mean, if you look at his photographs and I love the way that he did it because he would arrange elements and he talks about that arranging elements. And people had our time talking about his stuff because they want to use the word composition. And he would start talking about arranging elements and he would use color to move the eye around. But then he started this style probably last 15 years of his life. Where. The subject and the emotion in that predicament was being brought out in large part by light. There's a really gorgeous painting, one of the first ones in this example of a frontiersman coming up kind of out of a drawer. And Bison. It was there. He'd shot and pack horses. And and Russell's really getting from about the waist down. You can easily see this this plane of shadow going across most in the foreground. Then you've got this last little rays of light going across the top of the of the frontiersman and going out to the far distance And a lot of the scenes were based on where he was a cowboy and the muscle shell. And and they pointed that out really well done in the exhibit, how he started using this technique of color and light to move the eye around the painting as he told a visual story, I'm like, wow, this is like this is like advanced photography lessons right here in these paintings. And yeah, he had he had the ability and he was really good to the paint as he saw this. But he had to see it to paint it, which is the same as with photography. You have to you have to to see it to photograph it yet to photograph it, to see it. And the one thing it struck me as a going through it was, you know, he would he would incorporate the predicament which two turn of phrase lot of photographers feel like they're in a predicament when they put the camera to their eye. And I was just like, wow. So I just wanted to, you know, I was. Ryan Seacrest. I don't know if you know who he is, but he just started. Game show host on. On Wheel of Fortune. That was it. Anyway, he was talking

about. To calm his mind and energize himself. He walks across the street from where he films A Wheel of Fortune to. I think it's the L.A. County Museum of Art. Thanks to anyone who goes to an art museum. And even though he's been there hundreds of times, he's on the board of directors. He goes there and just looks at the art and the way artists tell stories, and it calms his mind and fills him full of energy. So. You might be able to tell that I was kind of energized. Looking at Troy Russell's exhibit. I got all these ideas, I've got jotted down all these notes, and it's just. As we venture forward with the camera. We tend to make things a little bit more complicated rather than less complicated. We start looking for other ways to justify the way we do it rather than just saying that's who we are and accept it and it's okay no matter what anybody else says. So I'm this encouraging to encourage you to go out and check out Art, go do a Google search on Charlie Russell, look at his paintings. I think that you'll find that. He was a pretty, pretty amazing communicator, even to this day and age. And it might just help the predicament. You folks have a absolutely marvelous week. Get yourself ready for fall. Mama is going to be coming out with their fall coats. We are going to have some gorgeous light. It's a marvelous time to be a photographer. And remember to make every click. Your memory.